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COLUMBUS, BY ANTONIO MORO

(See Supplementary Picture)

THE selection of a portrait for the Columbus souvenir coins, which are to be issued for the benefit of the Chicago Fair, has aroused a lively and interesting controversy as to which portrait should be selected as that which may best represent the man. There are objections to the general design of the coin, but the main opposition centres on the choice of the portrait itself. Scarcely another man of note in history has left so indefinite a record of his personal appearance to posterity as the great explorer, for while there are dozens, not to say scores, of what profess to be likenesses of him in existence, in one shape or another, the selection of any one of them, with even a measure of exactitude, is impossible. All that can be done is to rely upon comparison with the written descriptions, with the aid of what can be traced of the history of the pictures themselves.

It is not at all likely that amid the extravagant honors showered upon him on his return from his first voyage to America Columbus was left without having his portrait painted. At a time when every great noble had some sort of an artist among his personal pensioners, the painting of portraits was almost as common a practice as photography is to-day. Among the courtiers it was a popular device to curry favor from their patrons by wearing a miniature of the reigning favorite as a jewel. One may assume, therefore, that there must have been some likeness of Columbus made at the time when he was, in his way, the greatest man in Spain. Unfortunately, Spain has passed through tumultuous epochs since 1493, and such records are the first to be lost or destroyed in the turmoil of civil war and the invasion of conquering armies.

One thing is certain: that the types popularly accepted as Columbus for many years, which represented him either as a square jawed, bull-necked man, with a broad face; or a patriarch, with a venerable beard, in no way accord with the descriptions of him left by his contemporaries, including his own son. These unite, with but little difference of detail, in depicting him as a man of a somewhat long and oval face, a ruddy and sanguine complexion, and a fondness for magnificence in dress, which he sustained by a commanding carriage. In these respects, the portrait belonging to Mr. C. F. Gunther, of Chicago, agrees with the statements of Peter Martyr, Andrea Bernaldez, Las Casas, Oviedo and others, who speak from personal knowledge of the man, of his blue gray eyes and his red or auburn hair. Moreover, Fernando Columbus, in his biography of his father thus describes him:

The Admiral was a man well formed and above the middle height; his head was large, his cheek-bones rather high, his cheeks neither fat nor lean, aquiline nose, his eyes small, light blue or gray, with the white parts rather inflamed.

Washington Irving, who certainly had facilities enough for finding a true portrait of Columbus, if one existed, since he had free access to all the sources of information, public or private, in Spain, while he was writing his history of the explorer, must have found cogent reasons for selecting this portrait as the one to be engraved for his revised edition of the "Life," in 1850. Moreover, without some firm conviction on the subject he would not have given it so conclusive an endorsement as he did by saying:

The portrait of Columbus prefaced to the present volume is from a beautiful picture painted by Sir Anthony Moro for Margaret, Governess of the Netherlands. It was brought to this country about the year 1590, and has been in possession of one family until very recently, when it was purchased by Mr. Cribb, of King street, Covent Garden, London. The characteristics of the mind and features of Columbus are so forcibly depicted in this picture that no doubt can remain but that it is a true and perfect resemblance of the great navigator.

That a man so conservative and cautious as Irving should commit himself so positively, except upon reasonable grounds for confidence, is not credible.

The Gunther "Columbus" was, by the account attached to it, painted from miniatures then existing in the royal collections, while Antonio Moro was working under the patronage of Charles V of Spain, and of Prince, afterwards King Philip II. These miniatures are said to have formed part of the collection in the royal hunting palace of El Pardo, some ten miles outside of Madrid, and to have perished when that mansion was destroyed by fire. The "Columbus" of Moro had been sent as a gift to Margaret of Parma, who was a bastard sister of Philip II, and at the time Governess of the Netherlands, her husband, the Duke of Parma, having succeeded Don John of Austria as Regent over the Spanish conquests in the Low Countries. It is curious to note that the year 1590, when the picture is said to have passed over to England, was the very year

in which the Duke of Parma, broken in health, left the Netherlands, and the United Provinces commenced to conquer their freedom. It might easily be, therefore, that, left behind with other cumbrous property by the Duke on his departure, it fell into the hands of the Dutch or of some one of the English adventurers who served with them, and wandered across the channel as part of the spoils of war.

The frame in which the picture is enclosed is a remarkable piece of antique carving. At the base is a trophy of crossed cannon, mounted on carriages, trumpets, cannon cartridges, armor, drums or other insignia of war. On either side the warlike trophies are continued, with clusters of pistols, bandoliers carrying loaded cartridges, Indian arrows, war clubs, etc., with four cupidons supporting shields on each side, and an anchor at each corner of the base. The frame is topped by two cupids, supporting a shield topped with a crown, against a grouping of standards and cannon. The shield bears as quarterings an anchor, a ship under sail, a naked arm brandishing a sword, and islands in the sea. When Columbus returned from his first voyage, Ferdinand conferred upon him, at Barcelona, as Irving relates, a coat of arms, "in which the royal arms, the castle and lion, were quartered with his proper bearings, which were a group of islands surrounded by waves." When the royal favor was removed from him, he naturally substituted these more appropriate quarterings for those which he was no longer granted the gracious regal privilege to bear. The carving of the frame is in high relief, and in the Spanish style of the sixteenth century.

THE BOOK LOVER'S ALMANAC

IT has been truly said that one must go abroad to learn news of oneself. In the latest of Mr. Quaritch's "Rough Lists" he announces himself as ready to receive orders for "The Book Lover's Almanac for 1893," with illustrations by Henriot and texts by Mr. Du Bois and other bibliophiles. It is rather a roundabout way of getting at the news of a new issue from the De Vinne Press, to be sure. The "Almanac," in fact, is a publication of Duprat & Co.'s, of this city, and its publication is set by them for an early date next November. The edition will be limited to 600 copies, of which there will be 200 on Japan and 400 on Holland paper.

The illustrations, twelve in number, are drawn by Henriot, in water colors, strengthened with the pen, and are sparkling in treatment and in witty application to their subject, as might be expected from such a source. They have been reproduced in color by Drager and Lesieur, of Paris, in close conformance to the originals. Indeed, it would be difficult for anyone but an expert to establish a preference between the copies and the originals themselves. Each plate bears an appropriate caption and text.

The text of "The Book Lover's Almanac" consists of articles calculated to be of interest to bookmen, relating to the most important events of the year, and, with the calendar, occupies upwards of sixty pages, with original borders. Several original poems lend a flash of rhythmic gaiety to the letterpress, and all the articles are fresh and interesting. The book is a square, 12mo, and is now being made up at the De Vinne Press. It will be sent before the public in a brocade paper cover, and our book collectors will, I am sure, find it as neat and coquettish an almanac, in the most pleasant artistic taste, as has ever been issued. Messrs. Duprat & Co. are certainly to be congratulated upon what should be the foundation of a most successful annual venture.

Munkacsy's painting, "The Last Days of Mozart," which has been carried all over Europe for exhibition without a scratch, recently came near receiving serious injury in the parlor of its owner, General Alger, of Michigan. His young son, with martial ardor, was flourishing the General's sword and touched the canvas with its point. Fortunately the blow fell where the picture was backed and little harm was done. The painting is soon to be presented to General Alger's daughter as one of her bridal gifts. Just now it is on exhibition in Minneapolis.

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The New York *Sun* tells the almost incredible story that an artist, a member of the National Academy of Design, had undertaken the decoration of a private residence. He engaged a fellow-artist and Academician to paint pictures on the walls of one of the rooms. While this painter was at his task a walking delegate came up to him, and this colloquy occurred: "Do you belong to the union?" "What union?" "The fresco painters' union." "No; I am not a fresco painter; I am an artist." "Well, if you don't join the union I shall order out every man at work in the house." Under that threat, and because his fellow-artist, who had agreed to complete the decoration, would lose money if such a strike occurred, the artist was forced to join the union, pay the dues, and put himself under the authority of the walking delegate as an artisan slave!



CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

PAINTED BY SIR ANTONIO MORO.

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